

Jon Sillari

Tue 11/9/2021 12:13 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- [mayor@cityofsomerville.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofsomerville.gov)
- Lance Davis
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

I want to voice my opposition to the removal of any parking along College Ave. I believe that doing so would be irresponsible and a huge detriment to businesses on College Ave.

I would like to point out that the project's author Brad Rawson expressed specifically to me and some business owners that the data they were using to make these decisions was incomplete. The data was taken during a two-week period, pre-covid during a beautiful spring month. There is an extensive parking and traffic study being done this coming summer and changes should not be made until this is completed.

In addition to this, the city's outreach was unsatisfactory. I manage or own more than 10 addresses that will be directly affected by this project and was not asked for any input or invited to any conversation until after the plan had been finalized. This is the same for my tenants and neighbors along College Ave. In addition, Mr. Rawson promised another meeting prior to any final decision being made which of course did not occur. He also neglected to alert us to the traffic commissions meeting. During the meeting he did not present at all and his colleague Justin Shreiber did not supply any relevant data that would have given the commission a view of the opposition. The only people who spoke in favor of the project were either part of the Somerville Bicycle committee or part of the project itself. I believe actual community outreach needs to be done.

Please feel free to reach out to me for more details.

Sincerely,

Jon Sillari

Olivia Bittle

Thu 11/18/2021 2:43 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

I work at Apartment Rental Experts in Davis Square and I would like to express my concern about the lack of parking accommodations available near my office.

I work 6, sometimes 7 days a week servicing my community by helping numerous individuals find housing accommodations. Oftentimes my appointments are back to back and leave little time to find parking at the office, pay, walk to the office, get ready for appointments etc. With the removal of parking along College Ave this will only make my situation, and that of many others much harder. There is never any permit parking available in the area so we are pushed out onto the main roads where paid parking is available.

Working 9 hours a day I spend roughly **\$30/day** paying for parking that was already extremely difficult to come by in the first place. Biking is not an option for me as live many towns over. Overall, I feel as though many members of the community who keep it thriving and positive would be getting left out of these new plans. Safe biking is important but can be encouraged through speed monitoring or other means.

I hope you take this information into consideration.  
Thank You.

Fernanda Muhlbeier

Thu 11/18/2021 2:17 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

My name is Fernanda Muhlbeier and I work at Apartment Rental Experts located at 18 College Ave in Somerville. I have been working here for 4 years and as a rental agent I heavily rely on my car to do my job.

As you know, College Ave is made up of metered parking and 2 hour parking and without these parking spots I will have nowhere to leave my car while I come to the office. My office alone has 8 agents who all rely on their cars to make a living. We all park on College Ave everyday and removing the parking will affect all of us as well as all of the other businesses in Davis Square. We also all pay for the meters which is a great additional source for revenue for the city.

So I ask that you please reconsider removing the parking on College Ave. We all depend on this parking everyday and doing so hurts all of us and our families who depend on our incomes.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Fernanda Muhlbeier

**kumar sindurakar**

Thu 11/18/2021 7:07 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

It is really unfortunate to hear about the news of removing majority of the parking along College Ave. A majority of our clients use these spaces and one of our salon's appeals is the convenience of parking. As I have become aware of this removal, I feel it will affect my business greatly especially at this sensitive time when we are just getting back on our feet after the pandemic. Please reconsider this decision as it is a very important issue for us and we really do need those parking spaces for our clients. Or the least you could do is involve us in this matter since this will impact us greatly. We should have been able to express our concerns and work out a way to have parking options for our clients. Once again, we request you to reconsider this decision and understand our situation. We forward to hearing from you.

Best,

Eyebrow Threading

Kumar Sindurakar

Parup Singh

Thu 11/18/2021 5:06 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,  
We need the parking spots.

Parup Singh

Manager

Apartment Rental Experts

617.909.1610

[www.apartmentx.com](http://www.apartmentx.com)

Vanessa Miller

Thu 11/18/2021 5:00 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

My name is Al Jean-Baptiste and I work at Apartment Rental Experts at 18 College Ave in Davis Sq. I have been working here since 2002.

Our business needs parking for our customers. It has always been difficult for our customers to find parking here. I am concerned that this new plan will only increase the difficulty. Further this job requires the agents who work here to have a car and bring it with them to work. Essentially this new plan would make it impossible for both the agents and the customers to come and go from the office with ease. This is not fair.

COVID-19 already decimated our business and this would be the nail in the coffin. Why are you OK putting people out of business? I've worked in Davis Sq for 20 years. My opinion and my job should matter.

Davis Sq is already congested. This plan only adds to the congestion. If you're going to remove the parking are you also going to add parking spaces? If not where will all of our cars and our customers cars go?

Please consider all parties involved and not just the handful of bike riders. Maybe you should create alternative bike routes on less congested streets. Davis Sq is already jam packed, bike lanes will only make it worse. Please try to come up with a plan that does not favor one group and alienate another. The current plan is not a compromise and it needs to be.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

**Eric Raynor**

Fri 11/19/2021 10:34 AM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials, please don't do this! I'm responding to a recent notice about this. As a person who frequents the area for business and personally ( to visit restaurants and give business ) and who doesn't have a permit, or would be devastating to remove the meters. They did it in Cambridge in Central sq and it's awful. Aside from individual people wanting to come to the local businesses and having no where to park, delivery trucks mail folks, construction vehicles, suppliers etc are always double parked in the only lane since there is no room to pull over as it's been given over to bikes and it's causing congestion and lots angry people. This is a bad idea!

Sent from my iPhone



Zachary Yaro

Wed 11/24/2021 2:11 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

I received a note on my car that the city of Somerville intends to place more metered parking on side streets. This concerns me because my apartment does not have an available driveway, so permit parking is the only way for me to park near my home, and it is already difficult enough to find parking on my street without further reducing the available space.

This is the first I have heard of this plan, so I am not sure how set it is or whether there is more public information than I was able to find (and I would appreciate any additional information since I get the impression the source of the flyer on my car may not be one I entirely agree with). My understanding is this is to remove parking from College Avenue to make way for additional bike lanes, which I absolutely appreciate, but as long as our I still need to own a car, I hope there is another way the bike lane project can move forward with less inconvenience to residents on side streets off College Avenue.

Regards,

Zachary Yaro

**Jim Faulkner**

Sat 11/27/2021 8:51 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

Please keep street parking near business that rely on takeout and delivery services. Cambridge has already removed a significant number of parking spaces on both sides of mass Ave making it impossible to stop for quick errands and take out, forcing more traffic to circle in residential streets looking for increasingly sparse parking. Davis Square needs outdoor dining AND parking. There have already been a number of accommodations for cyclists. Let's wait and see if these are sufficient before harming our small businesses and non-cycling residents.

Jim Faulkner  
79 Wallace Street  
Somerville, MA

Amanda Rychel

Mon 11/29/2021 5:02 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

To Whom it May Concern,

I cannot attend the public meeting on 01DEC so am writing an email of support for protected bike lanes and bus lanes on College ave. This directly affects my travel pathways as I live in Ball square. Any improvement to bus timing and frequency we can make we should definitely do. Also, improvements in bike safety will also improve pedestrian safety. We cannot have another pedestrian killed by motor vehicles travelling down College.

Amanda Rychel

29 Lowden Ave, Ward 6

Jeff Byrnes

Mon 11/29/2021 3:20 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Esteemed members of the Somerville Traffic Board:

I would like to voice my support for protected bike lanes and bus lanes on College Ave as part of the College Ave Mobility Improvements Project.

Please include these important safety & usability features as part of this project.

Thank you for your time & attention.

--

Jeff Byrnes

[my.pronoun.is/he/him](https://my.pronoun.is/he/him)

[somervilleimby.org](https://somervilleimby.org)

[@SomervilleYIMBY](https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleYIMBY)

[facebook.com/SomervilleYIMBY](https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleYIMBY)

704.516.4628

Rosemary Nolan

Tue 11/30/2021 1:46 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

I am writing this as a life long resident of the city and a resident of Francesca Avenue. What you have done to College Avenue already has caused an increase of non neighborhood residents to come and leave there vehicles for the day. The removal of parking on College Ave will only worsen things for the residents of the area as well as all the local small businesses that have suffered through Covid.

If anything should be done to Davis Sq you should first start by policing and cleaning up the area so that the square can be enjoyed by all. People from the area as well as businesses should be notified and involved in the decision making. As a voter I am totally discouraged at the lack of consideration given to the area residents.

Please reconsider your decision to remove any parking from this neighborhood.

I have been informed of your meeting tomorrow evening by a local business owner and plan on attending.

Thank you for your time  
Rosemary Nolan

Jack Connolly

Tue 11/30/2021 11:58 AM

- **Transportation;**
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Kimberly Wells;
- Katherine White

**Cc:**

- Joseph Curtatone;
- Lance Davis;
- Matthew McLaughlin

**+13 others**

Honorable Members of the Traffic Board

I have viewed the City Website (link below) regarding the above meeting

<https://www.somervillema.gov/news/traffic-board-public-hearing-college-avenue-changes-december-1>

I plan on attending, but I have a few concerns regarding the information on the notice.

Why were items #3 and #4 from the July 15th meeting, including the REMOVAL of Parking on College Ave not listed on the Traffic Board agenda for Dec. 1 @ 6PM?

Here is the info listed on the website under UPCOMING EVENTS OF THE TRAFFIC BOARD

Traffic Board Public Hearing

***The City of Somerville Traffic Board will hold a virtual public hearing on Wednesday, December 1, regarding the Somerville Traffic Commission July 15, 2021, actions making regulatory changes for the College Avenue Mobility Improvements Project.***

#####

No where is it mentioned that this is an **appeal hearing** of the votes taken at the July 15th Traffic Commission meeting where resident voters appealed those votes taken that evening.

Additionally, there is a deadline for information to be sent by 4PM to the [Transportation@somervillema.gov](mailto:Transportation@somervillema.gov) email.

Having chaired many public hearings in my career as an elected Somerville official (Alderman now known as Councilor), it was a common courtesy to allow additional testimony to be submitted for a time certain after the meeting (7-14 days), especially if there was information provided at the hearing that merited consideration or verification of provided testimony; Why not at this public hearing?

I am not sure when that decision was made, and was it made in a public meeting? Could you kindly advise when that occurred?

Another matter of concern is the fact that the City is going to make a brief presentation (how long?) yet there was no summary or details provided in the notice of that presentation.

Is this the same presentation made at the July 15th 2021 Traffic Commission meeting currently being appealed?

Should not members of the public have an opportunity to view a summary of the info in the notice of the presentation, and given an opportunity to present an opposing point of view?

Specifically, why aren't the petition-approved appellants included in the agenda and allowed an opportunity to make a presentation of their objections to the July 15th, 2021 votes taken and approved?

This lack of appellant opportunity certainly does not seem to be the least bit fair, nor very transparent, particularly not to reveal the true nature of this public hearing on the City of Somerville's official website, since it is dealing with an approved appeal brought by resident voters of the City.

**I might suggest that in the interest of fairness and transparency, the members of the Traffic Board discuss these concerns, and consider rescheduling the meeting to a future date, especially with the changes effective with the new City administration being sworn in in early January 2022.**

I am also aware that the City is currently conducting a citywide parking study that began in August of 2021, and I believe is to be concluded in June of 2022.

Why not delay any parking removal on College Ave. until this study is concluded?

Metered parking has been available on College Ave. and in and around Davis Square for well over 60 years. Why the hurry?

Let's hit the 'pause button' on the College Ave parking removal until a more inclusive review of the impact on residents, businesses, service providers, (and employees), patients' of health care providers, property owners (taxpayers), and congregations' of several College Ave churches can be done in a much more open, transparent, and fair process.

I appreciate any and all consideration of my concerns and observations; After all, shouldn't this be about the neighborhood residents and community members impacted?

As Ever,

Jack

**John M. Connolly**

**17 Winslow Ave. Somerville MA 02144**



**John Connolly**

Tue 11/30/2021 4:31 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa Krouch

Tue 11/30/2021 12:30 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White;
- **Traffic Commission;**
- Brad Rawson;
- Mayor;
- Lance Davis;
- Katjana Ballantyne

Hello traffic board and relevant city officials,

Sent from my iPhone

**Mario Bollini**

Wed 12/1/2021 9:02 AM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

I frequently commute by bicycle on College Ave, using it to get from my home in Powder House Square to the Minuteman bikeway. During rush hour the street is dangerously packed with cars blocking the bike lane, forcing me to squeeze between cars or ride on the sidewalk. During other hours the street is clear, enabling the few cars that remain to exceed the speed limit on their way to and from the highway.

Separated bike lanes and traffic calming infrastructure are essential to protect commuters like me and to enable other riders to safely reach the bike path.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mario Bollini

24 Powder House Terr

Greg Stanton Marra

Tue 11/30/2021 8:36 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Hi,

I would like to write in my testimony supporting the changes to College Ave to improve mobility for users of all modes. I lived on Foskett St until July (when I moved to Atherton St) - before Covid I used College to take my daughter to daycare in Davis, and during covid and would bike with my (now) toddler daughter on College Ave to get to parks in the area.

College needs upgrades to improve its safety for pedestrians and bicycles, and to calm the frequent speeding on the street. Improvements to transit, biking, and walking modes benefit residents, and will make Davis a more vibrant place. The changes to the street, including removing parking, are an improvement to the area.

Thanks,

-Greg Marra

Atherton St

Marshall Simpkins

Tue 11/30/2021 6:43 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Have the commission considered the adverse problems with the parking ban on the business's in Davis Square. Bicycles are not used during January, February and March during snow season. We know you want automobiles used less but this is a bad plan.

Marshall Simpkins

41R Russell Street

Somerville, Ma 02144

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Diane Shepard

Tue 11/30/2021 6:04 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

I am a Somerville resident who lives very close to College Ave (Billingham St). I think we should continue to have parking on both sides of the street. There are a few churches in a close proximity who use College Ave to park and attend Mass on Sunday. It's tough enough to find parking as it is. There are also many who use this street to park and take their children to the library. Let's not forget about Davis Square. With no parking on College Ave it would hurt our community. We have been dealing with busses for as long as I can remember. It doesn't make sense to put a buss lane in when there are many more cars on the road than busses. Maybe we should enlarge the sidewalks and make a bike lane to keep the cyclists safe.

I don't have all the answers, but we need the parking.

Sincerely,  
Diane Shepard

Sent from my iPad

Stephanie Galaitsi

Wed 12/1/2021 10:14 AM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Dear Transportation and Traffic Board,

I'm writing my support for the project on College Ave. I live on one of the abutting streets, and often bike or walk this corridor. **My primary concern is safety:** Leah Zallman's tragic death last year showed the risks of being in a crosswalk on this corridor. The cars are going fast, and I know from the report of a previous pedestrian collision at Kidder and College on 12/8/2018 that the sunlight can sometimes hit the motorists so they can't see very well. We need to slow people down and make them more aware of non-motorist users so anyone can navigate this corridor without getting killed. I'll add that my 4-year old son and I often cross College to get to the library, and despite the red light there, there are usually a few cars running through while I have the pedestrian signal. It is not a safe corridor, and it needs changes.

I know there are some concerns about parking loss for businesses. I'd like to submit this 2021 [meta-analysis of 23 studies in North America](#) that examined reducing lanes or parking in favor of active transportation (safer walking, biking). It found that such **parking reductions have negligible or positive effects for the profit of the abutting retail and restaurants.** The study notes that businesses routinely object to parking removal, but shows that in the 23 available case studies, their fears were not justified. I'm a big supporter of local business, and I would be concerned if I thought this would negatively impact them. But we should make our decisions based on data, and this is the data that exists.

Finally, the College Ave project **reflects Somerville's goals** of equitable mobility and accessibility, quality of life on the streetscapes, and climate change mitigation (see documents: Somervision2040, Complete Streets Ordinancy (2014), Neighborhood Streets Reconstruction Program (2013), Somerville Americans with Disabilities Transition Plan (2016), Climate Forward Action Plan (2018) and VisionZero (2020), among others), in addition to safety.

Somerville has stated its goals for planning for the future, and the design for College Ave supports these goals. Protecting parking is not one of them. **To give all this up for parking would bring some real questions to the entire planning and goal-setting process.** Since the data indicates that parking removal for active transportation does not hurt businesses, I encourage Somerville to move forward in meeting its stated goals by removing parking on the College Ave corridor to enable people on foot/bike/bus to get around more easily.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Stephanie Galaitsi

44 Morrison Ave



Matt C

Wed 12/1/2021 10:27 AM

To:

- **Transportation**

Dear Somerville city officials,

I'm writing in support of the planned street safety improvements on College Ave. Please don't cave in to the small minority of loud voices clamoring for preservation of free\* curbside parking & pleading for unnecessarily wide travel lanes in which to exceed the 20mph speed limit. We as a society wouldn't allow a minority of anti-vaccine zealots to dictate public safety policy, so let's not allow drivers to override proven street safety best-practices in the name of convenience & free parking.

For what it's worth, the plan I have seen **already** compromises too much safety in the name of preserving free parking: As someone who rides a bicycle on College Avenue every day, I feel it's essential to have physical protection for bike riders on College Ave northbound from Morrison Ave to Francesca, because this stretch of road is uphill where the difference in cycling speed relative to passing cars is greatest. **Don't give away any more public safety in the name of motorist convenience!**

\* Curbside parking costs approximately \$1300 per space per year to provide (Victoria Transportation Policy Institute, Parking Pricing Implementation Guidelines, Table 5 <https://www.vtppi.org/parkpricing.pdf>)

## **Glenn Kulbako**

Tue 11/30/2021 6:47 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

To the Traffic Board:

I have had my business address in Davis Square for 18 years. I rely on the parking in question on College Ave. for loading and unloading equipment, parcels and mail on a daily basis. During peak hours of traffic, and especially at rush hour when parking is closed on Highland Ave., the meters extending down College Ave. from the Square are of vital importance.

I imagine this is true of all the businesses in Davis Square that don't have parking. Out-of-town visitors constantly tell me that lack of parking is already a reason for them to avoid Davis Square.

I've just learned of this. It's unclear to me what the issues are, but I have two observations: 1) everyone I've spoken with regarding the new traffic calming on College Ave. is confused by the necessity of such traffic management lengths on College Ave., which is so congested in the area of concern that it's hard to imagine that traffic speed is an issue, or that a bus lane is necessary, particularly when the bus depot couldn't be any closer; and 2) it has struck me that there should be more controls for pedestrians (as opposed to vehicles), who currently walk illegally into traffic, particularly at the very beginning of College Ave., and at the intersection of Morrison Ave. Pedestrians need to be alerted to walk more defensively, when too many don't bother to look or are distracted by music and phones. This is also an issue on the community path, where pedestrians and cyclists are required to stop at intersections, but often don't.

I support the speed bumps on College Boulevard and Morrison Ave., as well as the new design of Powderhouse Circle, but as noted previously oppose the height of the speed bumps and have pointed out the dangers of unmarked curb bumpouts.

All of these considerations for businesses, pedestrians/cyclists and drivers have to be balanced in a manner that brings common sense to roads and business.

Sincerely,

Glenn Kulbako

Glenn Kulbako

[www.KulbakoPhoto.com](http://www.KulbakoPhoto.com)

411A Highland Ave. #247

Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Email: [glenn@kulbakophoto.com](mailto:glenn@kulbakophoto.com)

Office: 617.764.2752

Mobile: 617.947.9524

Recent Work: [www.Kulbako.blogspot.com](http://www.Kulbako.blogspot.com)

Contract photographer for the Washington Post and New York Post. Photos have appeared in 'The Departed,' Time Magazine, Newsweek, National Geographic, Smithsonian Institute & National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame.

AWARD WINNER: Best PR Photography, New England, CV Magazine; Ozzie Mention, Best Use of Photography, Oil and Gas Investor Magazine, August 2013 Issue; Small Business of the Year, Somerville, MA ASMP PPA

**Mark Chase**

Wed 12/1/2021 12:16 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Dear members of the Traffic Board,

I am emailing you to voice support for the City's efforts to make College Avenue safer and more inviting for sustainable modes of transportation along College Avenue. An ideal scenario would have removed more parking on the Avenue-- but the existing City plan is a good compromise.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Chase

Gordon Marx

Wed 12/1/2021 11:43 AM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

I support the proposed changes to College Ave. Somerville needs to be redoing roads to support all Villens, not just car drivers and parkers. This is the right direction to be moving.

Thanks!

Gordon Marx

Bowdoin Street

Todd Prokop

Wed 12/1/2021 12:39 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

Hello - I am a resident and homeowner in the neighborhood close to this project, and I would like to voice my **support for the mobility improvements on College Ave.**

Historically, College Avenue has had insufficient infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and runners. The lack of crosswalks between Summit and Morrison was a safety risk and motorists often acted in ways that posed hazards to cyclists, especially cyclists traveling northbound (uphill) out of Davis Square.

For our family, this project will significantly improve our quality of life. The additional crosswalks and bump outs at William Street and bike lanes will help us travel safely through this corridor. In addition, allowing the left turn on to Park Ave (and contraflow cycling on Park) will vastly improve our access to the Community Path eastbound.

We don't often use the buses that travel along College since we're so close to Davis, but I believe it is important to prioritize street area for bus users - traffic often backs up to William from Davis and this is an unnecessary delay for riders.

On-street parking in our area is plentiful, and has not been an issue even during the construction on College when many spaces were eliminated. The few spaces that will be removed for this project are less meaningful than the safety of vulnerable road users.

If any changes are considered, I think it would be a big improvement to include a **protected bike lane uphill from Morrison to Francesca**. This is an area where cyclists are traveling slowly and visibility is blocked due to the curve of the road. It's the scariest section to bike right now and a door zone bike lane will only improve it slightly.

Thanks for all the work you've done on this project, I can't wait until it and Holland are done!

Todd Prokop

2 Billingham Street

Anthony Parrella

Wed 12/1/2021 11:36 AM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

My name is Dr Anthony Parrella. I am a dentist at 102 College Ave and have practiced there since 1979.. Most of my patients come to my office by car. In the last 2 weeks I've had 5 patients call my office from their car and reschedule because they could not get parking. Do you realize how much damaging that is to my weekly income going forward? I still have to pay staff, the Hygienist, the assistant and office manager never mind my increasingly higher tax base. This administration is hostile to small businesses and they are creating a HARDSHIP to me my staff, my patients and the other dental practices and businesses in the area not to mention Sunday services at the Churches on the street. The damage will be irreversible and I'm sure a class action suite against the city and the committee members will follow. Let me ask the commission, " Has any one of you ever paid a staff in the private sector where you are responsible for their healthcare and income.?" I bet not. Why isn't someone from small business on this committee that would have the common sense to suggest alternative bike routes like Wallace Ave which is one way, much safer than College and would not require removal of valuable parking spaces? I believe that the barriers and restrictions on college Ave that you have erected will cause more accidents and disruption to traffic flow than you currently have. Please consider reversing these actions.

Sincerely , Dr A Parrella

Sent from my iPad



**Lee Auspitz**

Wed 12/1/2021 3:04 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

**Cc:**

- 'Jack Connolly'

TO: SOMERVILLE TRAFFIC BOARD

RE: ELIMINATION OF SHORT-TERM PARKING ON COLLEGE AVENUE

I write in support of the appeal to delay and more carefully consider the plan to eliminate 24/7 the short-term parking on both sides of the College Avenue approaches to Davis Square.

### *1. Timing considerations*

It is hard to imagine a worse time to fiddle with short-term parking in Davis Square. The pandemic makes it impossible to collect useful data on traffic flow and parking needs. The closure of many Davis Square brick and mortar businesses underlines the fragility of those that remain. Past studies of small business in Davis Square have emphasized the importance to them of short-term parking. The City's own "customer intercept survey" of 200+ customers of Davis and Powderhouse businesses reported that "only" 25% were car-dependent. Anyone who knows anything about small business understands that a loss of even 10% of patrons can spell bankruptcy. As a matter of timing, the parking eradication measure, which will, according to plan, be extended to Holland Street, has the effect of kicking small businesses when they are down.

### *2. Quality of life considerations*

Moreover, in the College Avenue case at issue, the short-term parking also serves non-business visitors to the elderly in Ciampa Manor, to the newly renovated West Branch Public Library, to the parking-free apartment house on College, to medical and dental offices, and to houses of worship. These visitors will likely roam the side streets for parking spaces, thus lowering the quality life in the surrounding neighborhood. For certain classes of shoppers (elderly, handicapped, infirm, people with small children) short term on-street parking is well known to be a crucial amenity.

### *3. Process and transparency considerations*

I was among those who attended all three public meetings on the College-Holland streetscape plans. At the first meeting, Brad Rawson asked for a show of hands by cyclists: nearly every hand went up. No similar show of hands was invited for businesses for the obvious reason. Nor was there any subsequent outreach at the other two meetings, until, finally, the small business community exploded in opposition.

While I note with appreciation that some of my written suggestions have been incorporated into City plans I have not seen any report on what the final plan looks like. This makes it difficult to comment intelligently on how this or that measure coheres with the overall plan. Instead, we have a self-defeating incrementalism of piecemeal measures that fail to take account of the broader context. For example, consolidating the two bus stops on College into a single stop was a good idea--which I praised--but the implementation combined it with a full-lane bump-out for a new bus stop in front of the Congregational Church that blocks any possibility of a continuous bike lane. Worse still, buses stopping at the bump-out will jut out into the opposing lane traffic, giving bikes the alternative of swerving into opposing traffic or going onto the handicapped accessible sidewalk (or onto the accessible bump-out itself). The “traffic calming” effect of the bump-out is thus purchased at the risk of life and limb—an unintended outcome that would surely have been noticed if a full, final plan had been adequately disclosed.

Similarly, a full disclosure of plans to use the vacated parking spots for an inventive bike lane proposed in non-final drafts might result in an improved result, as detailed in the next item.

#### *4. Considerations of Detail*

Do the advantages of the proposed bike lanes outweigh the blow to small business? It is worth looking at this in some detail.

a) *Coming out of Davis.* According to the plan, the dedicated bike lane coming out of Davis and extending to a left turn at Park/Winslow is to be understood as part of a larger bike route connecting the two branches of the community path to each other via Park-Wallace- Holland and to Tufts/Ward 7 via Park-Wallace-Broadway. The main innovation here is a “contraflow” bike route moving against one-way traffic on Park and Wallace Streets. The idea is that bikes will make a right turn from Highland onto the reserved (formerly parking) bike lane on College and then make a left turn from College onto a contraflow lane on Park (and a further right turn onto a contraflow lane on Wallace, emptying out into bike-friendly Broadway). The inventive contraflow idea deserves further discussion, but for our narrower purposes here there is an obvious safety problem: the dedicated bike lane on College is a potentially dangerous and confusing way to link up with the Park-Wallace contraflow plan. The proposed bike lane would occupy the extreme right-hand (formerly parking) lane of College. Bicycles

making a left turn onto Park would have a scant 60 yards to position themselves **outside** this dedicated lane for a left turn into oncoming traffic from Park Street, and across backed up traffic on College. Such lane switching poses a serious safety hazard. Moreover, bikes using the contraflow would face two additional hazards: they must cross College with a left turn against oncoming traffic from the right and enter Park against oncoming one-way facing traffic. Would a shared bike lane with cars marked by sharrows be safer? If so, the parking spots could be preserved. Does the City have written evidence that it has considered this and other alternatives.

If residential streets are put in play on both sides of College, could bikes be routed from the community path through Grove to Winslow and through Willow or Cedar to Morrison, bypassing altogether the pedestrian-heavy right turn from Highland to College and the fraught left turn from College into Park?

Under the current plan, could the safety hazard be reduced with branched bike lane markings?

It remains for the City to document that it has considered such alternatives.

I would suggest a moratorium on the parking removal plan until i) the Davis small business community has a chance to rebound from the Covid 19 shock, ii) a comprehensive "bicycle trail" through and around Davis is addressed independently of the College/Holland streetscape project, iii) the City addresses the safety and feasibility of several alternatives.

b) *Coming into Davis.* The plan here is to replace parking in the short block from Park to Winter with a 24/7 reserved bus/bike/right turn auto lane. Here, too, there is a strong argument for not locking in arrangements until the i) post-Covid picture is clarified, and ii) the City tackles the bicycle trail problem in a more comprehensive way. The costs of deferring the striping of bike lanes are trivial compared to the risks to life, limb and property of poorly conceived accommodations.

##### *5. Covid considerations*

The uncertain post-pandemic future of Davis Square business counsels caution in eliminating on-street parking until we have a sense of what will replace the businesses that fall to the wayside, who will fill the street-level retail spaces mandated under the new zoning code, and what the emerging traffic patterns and business prospects will look like. It is also worth repeating that the Covid situation has made it impossible to gather fresh data crucial to estimating levels of future use.

##### *6. Legal and cost-benefit considerations*

Given the palpable damage to commercial property values resulting from the elimination of longstanding parking slots, building owners might have standing to bring a legal action. The City's pioneering Complete Streets Ordinance (Article VII: Section 12-116) provides a flexible framework within which streetscape plans operate. It does authorize in paragraph (g) reduction of on-street parking as one of several devices to be considered. But the same paragraph also mentions cost-benefit analyses, as well as public health and safety determinations from the City traffic engineer. Other sections of the ordinance cite such considerations as economic development (c), comprehensive and connected networks (b), mandated annual rules-of-the-road education campaigns (e), and safe travel by all users (h)(1). As of this date, there are grounds to question whether the City has adequately considered the broader context.

## *7. Conclusion*

I believe that the case for deferral is strong. A full disclosure of the final proposal will improve the outcome.

As always, I appreciate the opportunity to comment. (I should mention that I have no material interest in any of the properties or proposals involved,)

Lee Auspitz

17 Chapel Street

Somerville, MA 02144

Aaron Greiner

Wed 12/1/2021 1:48 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

**Cc:**

- Somerville Bike Safety

Hello,

I am writing to you today in support of the planned changes to College Ave to add in bus and bike lanes. While I believe the current plan does not go far enough (this road really needs continuous protected bike lanes), it is a good step in the right direction.

The data is clear: Creating better bike and bus lanes is essential for the City to move towards more sustainable transportation. And, with an MBTA stop so close by, its a backward use for us to be dedicating so much street space to private vehicle storage. We also know what improvements like bike and bus lanes creates a mode shift away from personal vehicles, therefore reducing the need for parking.

On top of it all, College Ave is simply a dangerous place to bike at the moment. With traffic speeds to high for a shared street, and not enough room as-is for a protected bike lane, I have had several drivers almost hit me while I am riding my bike on this road. Alongside the improvements in Powderhouse circle, these changes on College ave will go a long way in creating the connected safe network for biking that we need to encourage more people to move sustainably.

Though I believe the plan is not perfect, I ask that the Traffic Board uphold the plan to remove parking to create room for bus and bike lanes.

Best,  
Aaron

Tom Leahy

Wed 12/1/2021 3:33 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

I am an elderly Somerville resident, I frequently visit Davis Sq. to shop and to conduct business, I normally park on College ave., To remove these spaces would create a hardship for me and other Davis Sq. patrons, it would also create a hardship on the small businesses that would certainly lose business if this unnecessary project is carried out

Please reject this attempt to turn Davis Sq. Into an unsafe gauntlet of travel

Respectfully

Tom Leahy

138 Capen St.

john amaral

Wed 12/1/2021 4:02 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

**Cc:**

- Jack Connolly

## DAVIS SQUARE COLLEGE AVENUE PARKING LOSS ATTESTATION

The complaint being raised by former Alderman Connolly is about parking in a specific business area near Davis Square. In this, focused statement, as a resident since prior to the Davis Subway project, I address the context in which it occurs, a **deadly inexorable** overthrow of our democracy which Somerville city government is currently engaged in abetting and advancing, one example of which is the scourge known as 'traffic calming' apparently deployed by individuals with officious power, too little practical experience; complicity, perhaps unwittingly. This replacement for reasoned government achieved local a milestone not long ago with the preternaturally bad decision to convert Somerville RB zoning, followed eventually, as we have seen, by 'dead-of-night' imposition of draconian 'traffic calming' measures without public presentations of opinion, evidence, hard scientific data, professional mining and analysis of data, regulatory oversight, adherence to Federal guidelines, full consideration of local and Federal legal liabilities, **such as, but not limited to, local and national restraint of trade**, disabilities interests, church leaders, devaluation of historic precedence, adequately balanced representation of constituent and stakeholder needs, or public permission. From the point of view of a city, it's both suicide and fratricide.

## SOME PARKING LOSS CONSEQUENCES

Aggressively discourages contractors from helping us maintain our wooden houses; they can't park and they can't easily travel.

Severely impacts the commute time for residents out and business-employees in.

Greatly diminishes the ability of restaurants and markets to restock.

Makes all stakeholders suffer: e.g. church services/funderals/weddings, businesses, residents, customers

Severe devaluation of properties which depend on College Ave public parking estimated by realtors at \$75,000 per lost parking space, which provides a baseline to compute real consequential damages for all concerned and affected.

Taken together, these measures constitute an unlawful un-permitted taking of wealth from Somerville citizens and deprivation of their customized individual needs and resources. They isolate us from their neighboring towns and adjacent resources and impoverish their livelihood.

Drained of efficient intelligent design such as rotaries, RB zoning and traditional wisdom, costly childish solutions have been imposed on our neighborhoods and tax-base.

First responders cannot do their jobs safely and efficiently.

Absent the nourishment of the flow of commerce from intelligent traffic design, moronic 'traffic calming' is yielding strange deformed fruit.



## EXPERIENCE OF TESTIFIER

For 42 years I have crossed College Avenue and driven it many thousands of times. I have developed a keen general perspective of who uses this road and how they use it, having extensive experience as pedestrian, bicyclist and vehicle driver. Somerville is engaged in destroying the safety and utility of this important river of commerce and universal services lifeblood for abutters, local citizens and travelers commuting from local towns who formerly brought their business here.

I purchased 90 College Ave in 1980. In 42 years, I have become personally acquainted with a variety of traffic conditions and personal safety issues concerning parking up and down College Avenue from the nationally historic Powderhouse downhill to the Davis Square business district (e.g. at the neighborhood cross streets Kidder/Summit and Francesca/William), as well as to study and conclude how the presence of parking aids pedestrian safety. Many is the time when I have had to duck between parked cars when I may have misjudged the speed of an accelerating vehicle. Without parking, our streets are less safe, homeowners can't host friends or engage required workmen, lives and quality of lives are threatened on a daily basis, citizens are continuously inconvenienced and small businesses are strangled and assaulted in ways too numerous to elaborate in this short statement. Since 2003, my direct experience includes, the traffic on Kidder Ave near its intersection with College and how they impact each other.

## HISTORY

#90 College was connected to the new sewer in 1890. It's partially visible in a photograph of 88 College published 1897 in "Somerville, Past and Present." For a century prior to that and for 100 years thereafter, the thoroughfare now called College Avenue connected with Elm was featured on the 1835 map of Somerville and was safe to cross at almost any time of day or night. No longer. The thriving community which arose and grew around this river of commerce has been dammed up and destroyed by the sad scourge of overreaching intermeddling 'traffic calming' which has the opposite effect from that advertised.

A PARKING-EATING BUSSTOP ISLAND AT 89 COLLEGE DEPENDS ON CORRESPONDING PARKING THEFT TO EXIST AND IS UNIVERSALLY CONSIDERED "MORONIC"

Today, College Ave is periodically deserted and saturated daily; at times, it's unquestionably unsafe from swerving accelerating vehicles and at other times, it's gridlocked from Davis to Powderhouse, as a result of being throttled and hamstrung by redundant poorly-timed traffic lights at Davis and excessive unnatural limitations at Powderhouse Circle. For the first time in 42 years, I am afraid each time I cross the street. Buses, scooters, cars and trucks may zoom from my left, while eastbound vehicles confront westbound vehicles nearly head-on as they zigzag dangerously entirely due to a new bus island universally pegged by many passersby I have engaged, including first responders police and fire, installers, street workers and random public... as "moronic." They all asked me "What were they thinking?" and I struggled to answer. I had to agree with them: Discharging and

loading buses have no business blocking traffic, for the good of all concerned. We have learned better from Jamaica Plain and we know better in Somerville.

## BUSSTOP OBSERVATIONS

Several times, I have been startled by the sound of vehicles hitting then skating over this obstruction.

I have observed that its wheelchair ramp is a dead-on target of eastbound traffic in the middle of the island.

I have seen the **continuing attempt to camouflage the dangerousness of this island** with 6-8 semi-permanent traffic cones

I have seen the poor attempt to mitigate this disturbance with proposed traffic lane markings that don't and will not work.

I have noted that east and west bound bus stops are too close together and traffic is routinely clotted at this point many times per day.

Designated bike lanes here are abject failures. Bikers either jauntily ascend the wheelchair ramp and careen off the end of the island or blithely mingle, **as they always have for 140 years**, with ordinary traffic. Others merely take to the sidewalks.

**Moreover, like a gardner's thumb on the tip of a hose, traffic velocity is still a direct function of pressure and indirectly of cross-sectional area, the effect of this constriction of normal traffic pressure accompanied by the natural need to accelerate on**

**the eastbound incline to Summit/Kidder often generates increased speed differential among and between east and west bound vehicles, while at the same time buses traveling in both directions may be abruptly seen to block traffic. For example, if one stands on this corner for an hour or two, one can hear the engines accelerating to achieve the necessary eastbound speed increase, often may be seen to create the opposite effect than I'm sure was desired at the Kidder/College junction where Leah Zallman was struck and killed. It appears to me that nothing about the recent changes at this location would have saved her.**

#### LEAH ZALLMAN'S TRAGEDY HAS NOT BEEN SERVED

I was nearby on November 3, 2020, when Leah Zallman died after getting hit by a pickup truck at Kidder and College. At several times throughout the day, conditions are worse now because the new oversized ungainly abutments (dubbed "Scylla" and "Charybdis") force drivers to zigzag around the bus island while recovering the lane as they accelerate to climb the College Ave incline, while adjacent traffic is encouraged to zip in a straight line at high speed while serious commuters are forced to seek alternate routes on side streets such as Kidder and Morrison because of coagulation at formerly efficient rotaries such as Powderhouse.

#### "FOR THE GREATER GOOD"

Somerville has joined Cambridge and Boston in an unholy alliance that, while masking itself as for the 'greater good' is in fact destroying from within the lively maintenance of the principals upon which the

Commonwealth was founded: the free pursuit of happiness generally enjoyed by citizens of these communities for as long as 300 years which has been decimated as of October 2021.

Here is what our own 'shining moral compass' Henry Kissinger had to say as he invoked the famous 'greater good' dictatorial posturing; a philosophy which may possibly be seen to operate in local 'traffic calming'.

Kissinger quote from a speech to the WHO Council on Eugenics, February 25th 2009: *"Once the herd accepts mandatory vaccinations, It's GAME OVER. They will accept anything – Forcible blood or organ donation- "For the greater good". We can genetically modify children and sterilize them- "For the greater good". Control sheep minds and you control the herd. Vaccine makers stand to make billions. And many of you in this room are investors. It's a BIG win/win. We thin out the herd, and the herd pays us for extermination services"*

In sum, the familiar ruse "for the greater good" was used in the 1930s in Germany and it is being used today in Allston, North Cambridge, Davis Square, Austria and Australia to mask a large agenda to ruin commerce, livelihood and control inter-city and extra-city travel. We need look no further than these locations to see how far and how easily this may be taken. In this case, I have shown that the greater good is not served by stealing parking from College Avenue. Please don't continue to fall for this.

## RECONSTRUCTIVE MEASURES SUGGESTED

Very few of the changes are improvements and nearly all are oppressive and overreaching. I urge the city of Somerville to:

Move all the Davis Square restaurants back inside their establishments and compensate them a little for their cost of build out.

Restore #89 College, First Church Somerville, by removing the island.  
Restore the bus stop to above Kidder and College.

Restore parking and reasonable time limits in all the former street parking locations recently taken in and around Davis Square and on College Avenue from Davis to Powderhouse.

Restore and sustain parking and meters near Davis Square.

Restore sane bus stops along the original sidewalk curbs and remove insane use of bus islands and lanes and bus traffic to block normal vehicular traffic by taxpayers and their neighbors

Require and enforce bicyclists and other small vehicle operators like scooters to hold driver's licenses and insurance

Ban skating in the street

Remove excessive unwanted unasked for speed bumps on tributary side streets put there without sufficient homeowner input or permission

## FINAL NOTE

I prefer to think that folks on the Traffic Board are the unwitting pawns of a magniloquent invisibly managed and funded imperial force, who may wake up to discover internal conflicts of interest and be brave enough to stand up to that larger force; to let the wisdom of the public enter their deliberations because there is moral and physical liability to be reckoned with.

John Amaral

Kim Tammaro

Wed 12/1/2021 3:56 PM

**To:**

- Katherine White

I am a member of Somerville Community Baptist Church. Also a resident of Somerville for the past 63 years, 144 Lowell St, Somerville, MA 02143.

I am deeply opposed to this change while the traffic study is in progress.

Please consider a pause on this item as it will affect all involved in the local community on College ave.

Thank you

Kim Wagner Tammaro



Colin McMillen

Wed 12/1/2021 3:35 PM

**To:**

- **Transportation**

I am Colin McMillen, a ten-year Somerville resident and homeowner at Bay State Avenue near the proposed College Avenue improvements. I would like to write in firm support for those improvements as proposed. I believe it will make our neighborhood safer for the thousands of pedestrians and cyclists who use College Avenue to get to & from Davis Square businesses, and for those who commute using the Davis Square Red Line stop, or the nearby bus stops, every day.

Thanks for your time.

Best, Colin